AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A flavor precursor composition comprising as an active ingredient ~~a flavor precursor compound~~

~~(flavor precursor compound A) in which a volatile flavor compound having a mercapto group in the molecule and a non-volatile compound having a mercapto group in the molecule are bound to form a disulfide structure, or~~

a flavor precursor compound ~~(flavor precursor compound B)~~ which is an organic compound represented by Formula (1) shown below in which R^1H is a non-volatile compound and R^2H is a volatile compound having in the molecule a furan ring structure ~~(including,~~ including a structure where part or all of the carbon-carbon double bonds thereof are hydrogenated, ~~hydrogenated)~~ or a thiophene ring structure ~~(including,~~ including a structure where part or all of the carbon-carbon double bonds thereof are hydrogenated ~~hydrogenated)~~, said Formula (1) being:

$$R^1—(S)_n—R^2 \qquad (1)$$

wherein n represents an integer of 1 ~~or~~ to 3, R^1H represents an organic compound having a structure in which the functional group R^1 is bound to a hydrogen atom and R^2H represents an organic compound having a structure in which the functional group R^2 is bound to a hydrogen atom, wherein R^2 is selected from the group consisting of 2-Furfuryl, 2-Methyl-3-furyl, 5-Methyl-2-furfuryl, 3-Furyl, 1-(2-Furyl)ethyl, 1-(2-Methyl-3-furylthio)ethyl, 2-Furyl, 2-Thenyl, 2-Methyl-3-thienyl, 5-Methyl-2-thenyl, 3-Thienyl, 1-(2-Thienyl)ethyl, 1-(2-Methyl-3-thienylthio)ethyl, 2-Thienyl and hydrogenated forms thereof and the functional group R^1 is selected from the group consisting of functional groups in which R^1SH represents a

compound selected from the group consisting of cysteine, homocysteine, glutathione, γ-glutamylcysteine, and cysteinylglycine, wherein R^1SH represents an organic compound having a structure in which the functional group R^1 is bound to the thiol group.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently Amended) A method for releasing the flavor component from the flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 1 wherein the sulfide bond in said flavor precursor compound ~~A or B~~ is cleaved using a reducing compound.

4. (Currently Amended) A method for releasing the flavor component from the flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 1 wherein the sulfide bond in said flavor precursor compound ~~A or B~~ is cleaved using a compound exerting its reducing ability via a reversible reaction.

5. (Currently Amended) A method for releasing the flavor component from the flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 1 wherein the sulfide bond in said flavor precursor compound ~~A or B~~ is cleaved using a compound having a free mercapto group.

6. (Currently Amended) A method for releasing the flavor component from the flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 1 wherein the sulfide bond in said flavor precursor compound ~~A or B~~ is cleaved by heating.

7. (Currently Amended) A method for releasing the flavor component from the flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 1 wherein the sulfide bond in said flavor precursor compound ~~A or B~~ is cleaved by altering the pH.

8. (Currently Amended) A method for releasing the flavor component from the flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 1 wherein the sulfide bond in said flavor

precursor compound ~~A or B~~ is cleaved by an electric reducing action.

9. (Currently Amended) A novel sulfide compound which is an organic compound represented by Formula (2) shown below in which R^1H is a non-volatile compound and R^2H is a volatile compound having in the molecule a furan ring structure ~~(including~~, including a structure where part or all of the carbon-carbon double bonds thereof are hydrogenated, ~~hydrogenated)~~ or a thiophene ring structure ~~(including~~, including a structure where part or all of the carbon-carbon double bonds thereof are hydrogenated ~~hydrogenated)~~, said Formula (2) being:

$$R^1—(S)_m—R^2 \qquad (2)$$

wherein m represents an integer of ~~1 to~~ 2 or 3, R^1H represents an organic compound having a structure in which the functional group R^1 is bound to a hydrogen atom and R^2H represents an organic compound having a structure in which the functional group R^2 is bound to a hydrogen atom, wherein R^2 is selected from the group consisting of 2-Furfuryl, 2-Methyl-3-furyl, 5-Methyl-2-furfuryl, 3-Furyl, 1-(2-Furyl)ethyl, 1-(2-Methyl-3-furylthio)ethyl, 2-Furyl, 2-Thenyl, 2-Methyl-3-thienyl, 5-Methyl-2-thenyl, 3-Thienyl, 1-(2-Thienyl)ethyl, 1-(2-Methyl-3-thienylthio)ethyl, 2-Thienyl and hydrogenated forms thereof and the functional group R^1 is selected from the group consisting of functional groups in which R^1SH represents a compound selected from the group consisting of cysteine, homocysteine, glutathione, γ-glutamylcysteine, and cysteinylglycine, wherein R^1SH represents an organic compound having a structure in which the functional group R^1 is bound to the thiol group,

and

a novel compound which is an organic compound represented by Formula (3) shown

below in which R^1H is a non-volatile compound and R^2H is a volatile compound having in the molecule a furan ring structure , including a structure where part or all of the carbon-carbon double bonds thereof are hydrogenated, or a thiophene ring structure, including a structure where part or all of the carbon-carbon double bonds thereof are hydrogenated, said Formula (3) being:

$$R^1—S—R^2 \qquad (3)$$

wherein R^1H represents an organic compound having a structure in which the functional group R^1 is bound to a hydrogen atom and R^2H represents an organic compound having a structure in which the functional group R^2 is bound to a hydrogen atom, wherein R^2 is selected from the group consisting of 2-Methyl-3-furyl, 5-Methyl-2-furfuryl, 3-Furyl, 1-(2-Furyl)ethyl, 1-(2-Methyl-3-furylthio)ethyl, 2-Furyl, 2-Methyl-3-thienyl, 5-Methyl-2-thenyl, 3-Thienyl, 1-(2-Thienyl)ethyl, 1-(2-Methyl-3-thienylthio)ethyl, 2-Thienyl and hydrogenated forms thereof and the functional group R^1 is selected from the group consisting of functional groups in which R^1SH represents a compound selected from the group consisting of cysteine, homocysteine, glutathione, γ-glutamylcysteine, and cysteinylglycine, wherein R^1SH represents an organic compound having a structure in which the functional group R^1 is bound to the thiol group.

10. - 15. (Canceled)

16. (New) A food or drink comprising a flavor precursor composition of Claim 1.

17. (New) A food or drink comprising the sulfide compound of Claim 9.

18. (New) A flavor precursor composition comprising as an active ingredient a flavor precursor compound selected from the group consisting of a flavor precursor compound

which is an organic compound represented by Formula (4) shown below in which R^1H is a non-volatile compound and R^2H is a volatile compound having in the molecule a furan ring structure, including a structure where part or all of the carbon-carbon double bonds thereof are hydrogenated, or a thiophene ring structure, including a structure where part or all of the carbon-carbon double bonds thereof are hydrogenated, said Formula (4) being:

$$R^1—(S)_k—R^2 \qquad (4)$$

wherein k represents an integer of 1 to 3, R^1H represents an organic compound having a structure in which the functional group R^1 is bound to a hydrogen atom and R^2H represents an organic compound having a structure in which the functional group R^2 is bound to a hydrogen atom, wherein R^2 is selected from the group consisting of 2-Furfuryl, 2-Methyl-3-furyl, 5-Methyl-2-furfuryl, 3-Furyl, 1-(2-Furyl)ethyl, 1-(2-Methyl-3-furylthio)ethyl, 2-Furyl, 2-Thenyl, 2-Methyl-3-thienyl, 5-Methyl-2-thenyl, 3-Thienyl, 1-(2-Thienyl)ethyl, 1-(2-Methyl-3-thienylthio)ethyl, 2-Thienyl and hydrogenated forms thereof and the functional group R^1 is selected from the group consisting of functional groups in which R^1SH represents a compound selected from the group consisting of cysteine, homocysteine, glutathione, γ-glutamylcysteine, and cysteinylglycine, wherein R^1SH represents an organic compound having a structure in which the functional group R^1 is bound to the thiol group

and a suitable excipient.

19. (New) A method for releasing the flavor component from the flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 18 wherein the sulfide bond in said flavor precursor is cleaved using a reducing compound.

20. (New) A method for releasing the flavor component from the flavor precursor

composition as set forth in Claim 18 wherein the sulfide bond in said flavor precursor is cleaved using a compound exerting its reducing ability via a reversible reaction.

21. (New) A method for releasing the flavor component from the flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 18 wherein the sulfide bond in said flavor precursor is cleaved using a compound having a free mercapto group.

22. (New) A method for releasing the flavor component from the flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 18 wherein the sulfide bond in said flavor precursor is cleaved by heating.

23. (New) A method for releasing the flavor component from the flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 18 wherein the sulfide bond in said flavor precursor is cleaved by altering the pH.

24. (New) A method for releasing the flavor component from the flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 18 wherein the sulfide bond in said flavor precursor is cleaved by an electric reducing action.

25. (New) A food or drink comprising a flavor precursor composition of Claim 18.

SUPPORT FOR THE AMENDMENT

Claims 2 and 10-15 have been canceled.

Claims 1 and 3-9 have been amended.

Claims 16-25 have been added.

The amendment of Claims 1-15 and new Claims 16-25 are supported by previously pending Claims 1-15, page 7, line 16 to page 8, line 13, and pages 11-14.

No new matter has been introduced by the present amendment.